Environment Damage due to Prawn Cultivation

3214. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Prawn-hungry West driving destruction in Asia: Report", appearing in the *Economic Times* dated May 28, 1996;

(b) whether cultivation of the prawn is causing environmental damage and loss of farm land in the country.

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reaction of the Union Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). Culture of prawns by adopting sustainable, eco-friendly and socially acceptable methods as per the guidelines issued by the Union Ministry of Agriculture, does not cause environmental damage. Construction of ponds on lands not fit for cultivation alone is permitted for shrimp farming- Conversion of agricultural land for culture of prawns is disscouraged and the same is also presently prohibited by the Supreme Court.

In India, out of the estimated brackish water area of 12 lakh ha., about 1.44 lakh ha. area presently is reported to be under shrimp farming. Over 75 per cent of this area i.e. about 1.08 lakh ha. is under traditional/ extensive farming and remaining 36,000 ha. under modified extensive/semi-intensive shrimp farming. It is also estimated that the total annual production of cultured shrimps in India as on 1993-94 was aroung 84,000 tons. There have been reports of some environmental degradation along Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu coast, in areas where there is a high concentration of shrimp farms.

(d) Government is encouraging prawn/shrimp culture activities under scientific culture systems to avoid any possible adverse impact on the environment. Guidelines have been issued to the State Governments which include, development of sustainable aquaculture as an eco-friendly activity, treatment of waste water, environment impact assessment study at the planning stage for units above 40 ha., avoiding use of chemicals and overall improvement in soil and water management practices.

[Translaiton]

Senior School in the Dhanbad Rail Division

3215. SHRI LALIT ORAON : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is no senior school in the Dhanbad Rail Division of the Eastern Railway despite its being predominantly inhabited by the Tribals and the Scheduled Castes and also being a backward area;

(b) whether the local people of Dhanbad Rail Division has been demanding a senior school in Barwadeeh since long;

(c) whether the Zonal headquarters at Calcutta has completed all the formalities in this regard and is only awaiting clearance of the Railway Board; and

(d) if so, the action proposed by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir. Kendriya Vidyalayas are functioning in Railway Colonies at Dhanbad (upto Class XII) and at Patratu (upto Class X).

(b) to (d). A proposal for upgradation of Railway Middle School at Barwadeeh, upto 10th standard was received from Eastern Railway. In view of the adequate educational faertities available at Barwadeeh, the proposal to upgrade the Railway Middle School thereat to High School has not been found justified.

[English]

Environmental Development of Chamundi Hills

3216. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Norwegian Government has come forward to give outright grant of Rs. 2.50 crores for the environmental development of Chamundi Hills in Mysore;

(b) if so, the developmental work proposed to be taken up with the said grant;

(c) the time by which the work is likely to be completed;

(d) whether there is any proposal to extend any financial assistance by the Central Government in addition to the said grant; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e). Does not arise.

Poaching in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

3217. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether poaching in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands has increased considerably;